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Maciej Woźniczka and Marek Perek, Eds.
Apokryficzność (w) filozofii
Nie/anty/pozaortodoksyjne dyskursy filozoficzne.
Częstochowa: Wydawnictwo
im. Stanisława Podobińskiego
Uniwersytetu Humanistyczno-Przyrodniczego
im. Jana Długosza w Częstochowie, 2017,
568 pp.

The book I wish to present to the Readers is another one in the series initiated by Maciej Woźniczka and Maciej Perek. The main theme of the book under review is the eponymous apocryphality in/of philosophy, and its full title is *Apocryphality in/of Philosophy. Un/anti/beyond Orthodox Philosophical Discourse*.

What deserves appreciation is the proposal put forward by the editors that competent authors should make an attempt to intellectually confront this interesting, somewhat ephemeral and undefined problem (as if deliberately hidden behind the veil of ignorance that masks it), yet still present in culture, and even more so provoking reflection from various points of view.

The semantic field of the *apocrypha* (ἀπόκρυφος) also evokes philosophically significant categories and problems. If the apocrypha is a text of dubious authenticity (in terms of credibility of content or its authorship), or even a text which is not authentic and false (but which attributes itself to the values inherent in the original), if a hermetic text is also addressed exclusively to a narrow group of the insiders (who declare that they correctly understand that which is difficult to understand unequivocally), is sometimes referred to as the apocry-

pha, then it gives rise to a multitude of philosophical and meta-philosophical questions, dilemmas, disputes, associations, and inspirations.

To what extent does philosophy itself contain features that are considered to be the hallmarks of the apocrypha? Well, the presence of falsehood, one-sidedness, and extremity—as Władysław Tatarkiewicz believes—turns out to be “a somewhat natural feature of philosophy because the subject matter of its investigations is so vast and concentrates so many different motifs that philosophers had to simplify or omit some elements out of necessity in order to achieve transparency in them, and thus other motifs gained an excessive position. In this way, philosophical theories became extreme, one-sided, false; yet only in this way did the objects of philosophy become transparent, tangible, however, theories became possible at all. And for most part, the development of philosophy went from extremes to extremes, and thus from falsehood to falsehood, in order to get closer to truth” (*Historia filozofii*, vol. 1, p. 68). Joachim Metallmann in his *Wprowadzeniu do zagadnień filozoficznych* [Introduction to Problems of Philosophy] indicates that this manual “should show philosophical problems, their richness and distinctiveness, their difficulties and their specific charm. Only those who have seen the ups and downs, the triumphs and illusions of human thought, can admire its heroic efforts and understand that even an error can be valuable and an illusion valuable. There is probably nothing more dangerous for culture than underestimating someone’s efforts and disregarding someone’s unsuccessful enthusiasm. There is no better school of criticism, respect for thought, independence, than to depict a struggle whose content, motive, and meaning are ultimately important in the pursuit of truth” (Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Polish Academy of Learning in Kraków). Roman Ingarden, arguing about the ideals of science in philosophy, once stated that we discover truth by discovering someone else’s mistakes, and even the highest requirements of scientific quality set by our research do not liberate us from knowledge of works which have performed a prominent role in the history of research in philosophy. Józef M. Bocheński was not afraid to express somewhat contradictory values of Thomas Aquinas’s achievements. He judged Hegel’s investigations in a similar way. Stefan Świeżawski claimed that mistakes that other philosophers make somehow contribute to progress in philosophy, adding that man must have the right to make mistakes, and wondering whether mistakes always are where we see them. He reminded us to remember the limitations and aspectual nature of human cognition, because we always comprehend the content from our point of view. The above-quoted statements by eminent philosophers seem like the statements forwarded by the authors of this volume, dealing with the topic of apocrypha in/of philosophy.

The volume under review is neatly composed, the texts are arranged thematically and thus comprise chapters of the monograph. The volume opens with an

extensive and informative introduction entitled “Relacja kanon–apokryf w filozofii” [Canon–Apocryph in Philosophy] written by the editors of the volume.

The first part entitled “Prolog do teorii apokryfu filozoficznego—konteksty biblijne, filologiczne, etnograficzne i antropologiczne” [Prologue to the Theory of the Philosophical Apocrypha—Biblical, Philological, Ethnographic, and Anthropological Contexts]—contains a selection of thematically ordered texts. It opens with a well-structured and concise study, which was aptly written by Jarosław Eichstaedt: “Apokryf—konteksty badawcze i kulturowe” [Apocrypha—Research and Cultural Contexts]. The following texts of the first part, which deal with the issues in quite a general way, consider further aspects of the apocrypha: Adam Regiewicz’s “Apokryficzne a midraszowe czytanie literatury” [Apocryphal and Midrash Reading of Literature], and Artur Żywiołek’s “Tristanowskie apokryfy” [Tristan Apocrypha].

The second part shows the links between philosophical and ethical thought, as well as the issue of the apocrypha. It begins with insightful analyses presented by Stanisław Buda in an interesting text “Filozofia jako apokryf” [Philosophy as an Apocrypha]. The following inquiries also deserve the readers’ full attention: Mirosław Pawliszyn’s “Logika na ławie oskarżonych” [The Logic in the Dock], Marek Perek’s “Kanon versus apokryf: granice rekonstrukcyjnej wydajności w badaniach rozwoju wiedzy. Studium przypadku” [Canon versus Apocrypha: The Limits of Reconstructive Efficiency in Research on Knowledge Development Research. Case Study], and Sebastian Gałęcki’s “Kanonizacja, tradycja i *the Great Books*” [Canonicity, Tradition, and *the Great Books*]. This part ends with a brilliant text “Podszepty pochopnego Hermesa, czyli dlaczego filozofowie ulegają pokusie etymologizacji” [Hints of Hasty Hermes, or Why Philosophers Succumb to the Temptation of Etymologization] by Marcin T. Zdrenka.

The second part presents an overview of carefully selected relation between philosophical and ethical thought as well as the issue of the apocrypha and apocryphality.

The third part delineates the birth and establishment of the convention of apocrypha— “Narodziny i ukonstytuowanie się konwencji apokryfu w filozofii” [Birth and Establishment of the Convention of the Apocrypha in Philosophy]. It contains five texts worth profound reading: the first one by Jerzy Krzakowski “Atopia Sokratesa a misja Jezusa – parallela czy curiosum?” [Socrates’s Atopy and the Mission of Jesus—Parallel or Curiosity?]; the second one by Krzysztof Sordyl: “Ojcowie Kościoła i manichejczycy wobec apokryfów na tle kryzysu pryscylianśkiej” [The Fathers of the Church and the Manichaeans in the Face of the Apocrypha in the Light of the Crisis of Prussia]; and the third one by Michał Płóciennik: “Gnoza w filozofii i religii—apokryf czy ezoteryczna esencja?” [Gnosis in Philosophy and Religion—Apocrypha or Esoteric Essence?]; the fourth text by Henryk Popowski: “Klasyka pism apokryficznych w filozofii chrześcijańskiej na przykładzie Pseudo-Dionizego Areopagity”

[The Classics of Apocryphal Writings in Christian Philosophy on the Example of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite]; and the fifth text by Paweł Milcarek: “Tomasz z Akwinu—persona non grata Uniwersytetu Paryskiego” [Thomas Aquinas—Persona non Grata of the University of Paris]. These texts have been arranged in chronological order of the occurrence of the issues.

The fourth part focuses on the following topic “Konwencja apokryfu we współczesnym piśmiennictwie filozoficznym” [Apocryphal Convention in Contemporary Philosophical Literature]. This part opens with an interesting and important text in the whole volume written by Maciej Woźniczka, “Apokryficzność zasad filozofii—zasada racji Martina Heideggera” [The Apocryphality of Philosophical Principles—Martin Heidegger’s Principle of Reason]. Maciej Olszowski undertook his research and entitled it “Na styku kanonu i apokryfu—Alfreda North Whiteheada próba odpowiedzi na pewne problemy filozofii nowożytnej” [At the Crossroads of the Canon and the Apocrypha—Alfred North Whitehead’s Attempt to Answer Some Problems of Modern Philosophy]. Dorota Halina Kutyla discusses “Berlińskie dzieciństwo, czyli Benjaminowskie doświadczenie świata” [Berlin’s Childhood, or Benjamin’s Experience of the World]. Grzegorz Trela, referring to Stefan Amsterdam’s output, provokes a discussion about Polish philosophy. Mirosław Murat shares his impressions about humanity at the threshold of the ideological cave in “Ludzkość u progu *ideologicznej jaskini*” [Humanity at the Threshold of an Ideological Cave].

The fifth part of the book presents the subject matter—as the title says—“Konwencja apokryfu w piśmiennictwie filozoficznym—konteksty słowiańskie” [Apocrypha Convention in Philosophical Literature—Slavic Contexts]. Presenting the workshop of a seasoned historian of philosophy, Wiesława Sajdek leads the inquiry toward the title question, that is, “Czy poeci mogą filozofować? (Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński)” [Can Poets Philosophize? (Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński)]. In a similar vein, showing the workshop of a historian of science and philosophy, Wiesław Wójcik in an extensive study—probably an announcement of a monograph—presents the philosophy of Józef Hoene-Wroński. The subsequent texts in this part are also very interesting, namely, Daria Chibner’s “Nowość jako kategoria kierująca życiem—droga Juliana Ochorowicza od szanowanego filozofa do wyklętego szaleńca” [Novelty as a Category Guiding Life—The Path of Julian Ochorowicz from the Respected Philosopher to the Cursed Madman], Mariusz Oziębłowski’s “Przejawy i przyczyny deprecjacji filozofii Stanisława Ignacego Witkiewicza” [The Manifestations and Reasons for the Depreciation of the Philosophy of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz], and Paweł Lechowski’s “Od futurologii do metafizyki nauki—Aleksandra Bołdaczewa filozofia temporalna” [From Futurology to Metaphysics of Science—Aleksander Boldaczew’s Temporal Philosophy]. The fifth part constitutes a coherent whole.

The sixth part bears the title “Apokryf filozoficzny jako inspiracja dla innych jego form w kulturze” [Philosophical Apocrypha as an Inspiration for Its


Other Forms in Culture]. This part comprises five texts: Zuzanna Sokołowska's "Na obrzeżach cywilizacji. Henry Thoreau i jego 'sztuka chodzenia'" [On the Outskirts of Civilization. Henry Thoreau and His 'Art of Walking']; Anna Gładkowska's "Relacja między sprawiedliwością a miłosierdziem, czyli słów kilka o miłosierdziu jako doskonałym wcieleniu sprawiedliwości" [The Relation between Justice and Mercy, or a Few Words about Mercy as a Perfect Incarnation of Justice]; Dawid Dziurkowski's "Urodzeni przestępcy w filozofii Cesarzego Lombrosa i Bogusława Wolniewicza" [Born Criminals in the Philosophy of Cesary Lombros and Bogusław Wolniewicz]; Dorota Halina Kutyla's text discusses the life and work of Saint-Simon; and, last but not least, Krzysztof Habdas's "Paradygmatotwórczy paradoks termiczny nestinarstwa" [The Paradigm-forming Thermal Paradox of Anastenaria].

According to the publishing tradition of the series, the whole is complemented by part seven which is the annex, "Appeal to the Authors" (a text documenting the research program in which the invited authors have been included) and short notes about the authors.

I heartily recommend this epistemologically valuable, interesting, and well-edited book by Maciej Woźniczka and Marek Perek. Let it inspire further research and discussions on the issues of apocryphality in culture.

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